

Let's connect faith and life. *Together.*

## Bradley Chestnut Accepts New Call in Bluffton S.C.

*Thanks to Bradley for his Ministry at St. John's*

By Susan Shinn Turner

Bradley Chestnut, St. John's contemporary worship leader since 2016, will become worship leader/pastor at Live Oak Church in Bluffton, SC, near Hilton Head. He starts March 15, and his last Sunday at St. John's is March 14.

"It's stressful but exciting," says Chestnut, a native of Myrtle Beach, S.C. "Caitlin and I will be moving 30 minutes farther from my parents and three hours farther from hers."

Chestnut received his master's degree in divinity from Wake Forest Divinity School in December 2020 and was ordained Jan. 3 at First Baptist Church in Myrtle Beach, his home congregation.

In what Chestnut calls the "Great COVID Reformation of 2020," he says, "It's a good time for us to make a change."

His new job will essentially include the same responsibilities he had at St. John's, but with a different twist, he says. "Live Oak is about the same size but it's a lot younger congregation. They are in the middle of a building campaign, too."

He continues: "Caitlin and I had to look toward the future, to buy a house and have a family someday," he says. "We just prayed about it and this opportunity came up."

Caitlin will keep her same job as a senior risk and compliance consultant for a firm in Charlotte. She works remotely, but will attend a meeting onsite every quarter, which gives the couple a chance to visit her parents in Hickory.

"We came home from our honeymoon on a Tuesday and had no idea any of this was happening," Chestnut says of the shutdown. "She hasn't been back to the office since."



The St. John's role was Chestnut's first full-time church job, although he'd worked in other congregations.

"I realized how caring people can really be," he says of his experience at St. John's. "To see the 9:27 service thrive is integral to that space. I'm gonna miss the collaboration and camaraderie. My heart and soul is in that service."

When Rob Durocher first interviewed Chestnut, he found him to be personable and someone with a servant's heart.

"It wasn't just, let's sing a few songs on Sunday morning," Durocher says. "He took his responsibilities for contemporary worship very seriously. He built relationships first, and he brought a new energy and fresh ideas. There's no doubt he cared very deeply for the people he worked with at 9:27, and there's no doubt we learned from him."

"We just truly wish him and Caitlin all the best in their new ministry," Rob adds.

# Pastor's Letter

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*Nathan Hough never imagined what he'd find when he stepped out to his new pig sty the other day. A baby piglet! Turns our Mama Pig was pregnant! Welcome to Spring, y'all!*

Dear friends,

As a kid, I always enjoyed turning the calendar to March (remember when we used to turn the Kitchen calendar?).

In South Carolina, March meant spring. Warmer weather, short sleeves, clear skies. Not always, but enough to know that warm weather was closer than cold weather. Love it!

As we peer into Spring, a few things come to mind.

1. I hope you'll step foot into the Outdoor Learning Center someday soon. It's just amazing, and the kids are loving it. We'll have a dedication in late April – when things are blooming – but you'll certainly want to take a closer look before then.

2. We had a monumental moment the other day in my Thursday morning men's Bible study. I asked how many of the men had received their vaccine. Of the 23 participants, every one of them raised their hands. Well done! Let's keep it up .. for your sake and the sake of the community.

3. Speaking of which, congrats to Alyssa Harris, one of our members who was recently appointed interim director of the Rowan County Health Department. Not an easy time to jump into the director's role, but Alyssa will do an outstanding job. Check out my interview with Alissa on our "Conversations that Matter" podcast.

4. Later this month you'll be receiving a new brochure about our G2G mini-campaign. As you know, our phase 2 campaign was interrupted by COVID, so it's now time to finish up what we started. Thanks to your generosity, we have the resources to begin the projects you prioritized a year ago – the sanctuary's lower level, replacement of HVAC units and other necessary infrastructure work, and the CDC. The mini-campaign invites contributions for adding handicap accessible restrooms to the main floor of the sanctuary and a renovation of the music wing.

5. This past week we learned that Bradley has accepted a call to a church in Bluffton, SC (see article on page 1). Bradley has been a creative, passionate addition to our ministry team for nearly 5 years. He will certainly be missed, but we're thankful that God has prepared him for this new opportunity. I know he'll make a powerful contribution to their ministry. We'll look forward to following his progress!

6. I hope you'll participate in our Lenten Personal Care Kit challenge. We'd love for every family unit to make at least one care kit. We'll then drive them all to Baltimore, where they'll be shipped around the world. What a great way to return thanks for God's great love through Jesus Christ.

Our very best to you this month. The picture above is a good snap shot of where I am right now. It's been a long, sometimes dark 12 months ... but new life is upon us! I have every confidence that God is welcoming us into the dawn of a new day, blessing us with the sweet smell of spring ... and the grunts of a newborn piglet. Enjoy!

+Pastor Rhodes

# The Season of Lent

**Sundays of Lent.** Throughout the 40-day season of Lent, our pastors will five disciplines of faith in a sermon series titled “Our Journey. *Together*: 5 Essential Practices of the Christian Life.” Online worship at 11:00 am; in-person worship at 9:27 and 11:00.

February 21: Worship

February 28: Serve

March 7: Give

March 14: Study

March 21: Share

**Wednesdays at 12:15: Services of Holy Communion.** Join us for Midweek Lenten Services of Holy Communion, Wednesdays at 12:15 pm in the Chapel.

**Wednesdays at 6:30 pm: Holden Evening Prayer.** Throughout the centuries, Lent has been a time for Christians to return to the disciplines of faith. Midweek Lenten worship helps us see worship as an integral part of our weekly rhythm. Join us **online** for Evening Prayer, Wednesdays at 6:30 pm. The 30-minute service is rooted in the beautiful music of Holden Evening Prayer, accompanied by piano, guitar, organ, and brass. Please note that the service is recorded and can be viewed at your convenience.

**Mondays in Lent: Music and Meditation.** Join us online at 12:15 on Mondays during Lent for a time of reflection, prayer, and music meditation.

March 1: Rob Durocher, Piano and Rosemary Kinard, Flute

March 8: Helen Rifas, Harp

March 15: Davis Brown, Piano Reflections

## Our After-Lent Study: “The Walk”

### *A deeper dive into our Lenten Sermon Theme*

When our Lenten sermon series is over, join us for a deeper dive into the 5 essential practices of the Christian life.

Perhaps the sermon series teased you into thinking more carefully about the “practice” of being a Christian. This study goes deeper — to help us see how these practices set the stage for a truly abundant life.

We’ll be using Adam Hamilton’s book, *The Walk*, upon which the sermon series is loosely based.

The study is offered in The Well via Zoom and in-person.

We’ll be asking a core question: “How do we walk with Christ --daily follow him, grow in him, and faithfully serve him?” The

answer comes as we look carefully at the life of Jesus and the writings of the earliest apostles. Together they lift up

Christian practices that have been a part of the church’s spiritual life for over 2,000 years.

“Each of these practices is intended as part of our daily walk with Christ,” says Danny Hines, “while also being an essential part of growing together in the church.

Understanding these practices

is a critical part of being a disciple.”

*Want to learn more? Contact [danny@stjohns-salisbury.org](mailto:danny@stjohns-salisbury.org) for information*



## FIRST LOOK



### March

This month in First Look (birth to 4 years old) we will answer the question: Who can love like Jesus? I can love like Jesus.

#### Our Bible verse of the month:

**“LOVE EACH OTHER AS I HAVE LOVED YOU.” JOHN 15:12, NIV**

## 252 Kids



### March

In March, our 252 Kids (K-5th graders) will learn it's not easy to wait until later for what you want now. But having patience means you believe good things are worth the wait.

#### Our Bible verse of the month:

**“WAIT FOR THE LORD. BE STRONG AND DON'T LOSE HOPE. WAIT FOR THE LORD.” PSALM 27:14, NIRV**

## Mark Your Calendars!

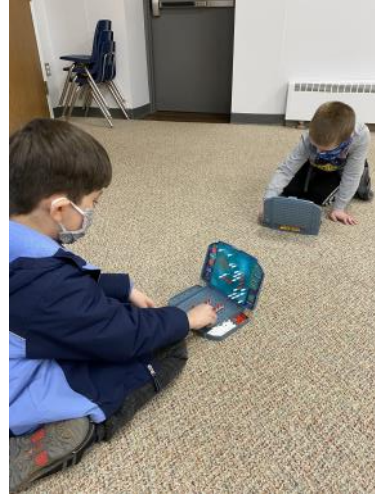
March 7 & 21— 1<sup>st</sup> Communion @ 11:00 service

March 14—Baptism @ the 9:27 service

March 21—7 pm 5<sup>th</sup> graders Zoom

March 21, 3 -7 pm—Holy Week & Easter drive through for birth – high school (similar to Christmas). We'll have fun bags for each family as we prepare for Holy Week and Easter. See your child's Newsletter for more details!

March 27, 10 am -12 pm— 252 kids (kindergarten-5<sup>th</sup> grade) Mark your calendar for our Saturday “BAKE OFF!” Taking a walk to Abigail's Bakery while learning about patience for what we want now is sure to be a great morning! **RSVP to Stacey by March 24!**

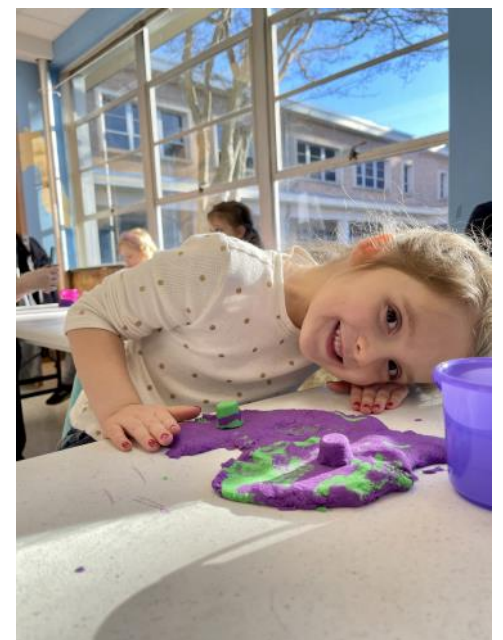


*In January, our 252 Kids (K-5th graders) learned that to live with responsibility, you've got to play well and finish strong. That's how you show you can be trusted with what is expected of you! (top row)*



*Our youngest kingdom kids met in February for the First Look milestone. (second row)*

*First Look met at the Sandbox to answer the question: Who Loves Me? Jesus Love me! (bottom row)*





**The Well Middle School**

In March, our middle schoolers will continue a series about injustice called, "Do Something."

**"All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it." 1 Corinthians 12:27 NLT**

- Wed., March 3, 6:30 pm – Mid-Week Lent Service Online (Lenten Book)
- Sun., March 7, 4-5:15 pm – Youth Group 4:00-5:15pm
- Wed., March 10, 6:30 pm – Mid-Week Lent Service Online (Lenten Book)
- Sun., March 14, 4-5:15 pm – Youth Group
- Wed., March 17, 6:30 pm – Mid-Week Lent Service Online (Lenten Book)
- Sun., March 21, 4-5:15 pm – Youth Group
- Wed., March 24, 6:30 pm – Mid-Week Lent Service Online (Lenten Book)
- Sun., March 28, 4-5:15 pm – Youth Group



**FUEL High School**

In March, our high school students will continue a series about injustice called, "Do Something."

**All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it. 1 Corinthians 12:27 NLT**

**March Calendar**

- Sun., March 7, 6-7:15pm – Youth Group
- Sun., March 14, 6-7:15pm – Youth Group
- Sun., March 21, 6-7:15pm – Youth Group
- Sun., March 28, 6-7:15pm – Youth Group



Are you a middle school or high school student?

Follow us on Instagram!

@sjlc\_highschool  
 @sjlc\_middleschool

## Senior Seasons



Congratulations to our Valentine Contest winners. First prize went to David Phillips (\$50 gift card to Ivan's Restaurant), and second prize (\$25 gift card to Longhorn) went to Michael Connor. Thanks to all people who participated.

### Kingdom Kids Valentine Art Gallery



Maddox Taylor



Kaleb Everhart



Kaleb Everhart



Finley Safrit



Katie Dangerfield



Dalton Safrit

*Thanks to Stacey Shafer and all the Kingdom Kids who submitted Valentine drawings for our Senior Seasons Valentine postcards.*

## Lunch-N-Learn

*March 9, 11:30 am-12:30 pm- Zoom Meeting*

**Mary Rosser**, Director of the **Pedal Factory**, will speak about the company's vision and mission to provide bicycles to all, regardless of age, income, or background, who may not be able to purchase a new one. The Pedal Factory began in Salisbury, NC in 2015. Since inception their focus has remained on providing bikes to the community.

**NOTE:** This would be a wonderful field trip opportunity. The address is 311 E. Council Street, Salisbury, so we could meet there and



tour their operation. Please contact Diane at 704-223-5589 or email [diane@stjohns-salisbury.org](mailto:diane@stjohns-salisbury.org) if you prefer to visit the company.

## Join a Small Group this Spring

**In what new ways has your ministry area been able to stay connected and think creatively about faith formation?**

If you are still looking to join one of our new small group studies, please check out our upcoming studies. If you are interested in one of these small group studies, email Danny Hines at [danny@stjohns-salisbury.org](mailto:danny@stjohns-salisbury.org) or sign up on the St. John's website in the adult small group ministry section. These 3-6 week studies provide you with the opportunity to engage in Bible study that is practical, thought provoking and applies to your everyday life. We will provide descriptions of these studies in FaithLife as well. We will begin this in a Zoom format but can easily transition to meeting in person when possible.



### Never Be the Same

**Tuesdays, March 16-30, 7-8 pm  
The Well and Zoom**

It's safe to say that not everyone likes change. Some people do, but not everyone. And not everyone reacts to change the same way, either—some avoid it while others embrace it. But whether or not you like change, change is constant. Change is inevitable. Change is good, change is bad, change is hard, and change is easy. And nearly everyone will experience all of the different kinds of change in their lifetime. So, since we're all

going to experience change, what do we do when it happens? And maybe more importantly, what does change do to us—or rather, what should change do to us? In this series, we're going to look at the role of change in the life of a Jesus-follower. The writers of Scripture were certainly no stranger to change, and Jesus wasn't, either. A lot of them had quite a bit to say about what change means—and their wisdom still applies to us today. Change may not be easy, but it certainly isn't the end of our story. In fact, it may just be the beginning. And when we embrace the transforming aspect of change, we'll discover that we'll never be the same. Easter is an invitation to a new way of life.

*(Day and Times for this small group are flexible depending on the Group's availability to meet)*

If you are looking for thought provoking weekly Bible Studies, Bible Project.com offers some very insightful studies on their website. You can access the weekly Bible Studies at the top of the opening page. These Bible Studies are geared for individuals and families.

### Ongoing Opportunities

Contact [Deborah@stjohns-salisbury.org](mailto:Deborah@stjohns-salisbury.org) to sign up

#### Tuesday Morning Women's Bible Study

With Pastor Laura, 8-9 am via zoom

#### Thursday Morning Men's Bible Study

With Pastor Rhodes, 8-9 am via zoom





## THE FINAL STRETCH!

What's coming up with our G2G Phase 2 Campaign?

**Our 3-week G2G Mini Campaign  
March 21-April 11**

*To wrap up fundraising work that was interrupted by COVID*

**Informational meetings  
about our G2G plan:**

*Sunday, April 18*

*Wednesday, April 21*

**Congregational Meeting**

*April 25*

Vote on a final construction contract.  
If approved, construction would begin  
as soon as possible!



Week of March 14: *Be on the look-out for our updated Campaign brochure and Response Card.*

# I Want Jesus to Walk With Me (ELW 325)

## *A Song for Our Lenten Journey*

By Rob Durocher

Minister of Worship and the Arts, Deacon

Deep from the history of the African American Spiritual comes a song without a known author or a known source for its tune and yet it is one of the most powerful songs of longing for a champion, a comforter, and a guide along the journey of life.

***“I Want Jesus To Walk With Me”*** has words that penetrate our soul and come from the unknown author’s heart because the words are so rich in emotion with a very deep reaching message - longing for the presence of a Savior.

This song has three simple verses:

(1) ‘I want Jesus to walk with me; all along my pilgrim journey, Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me.’

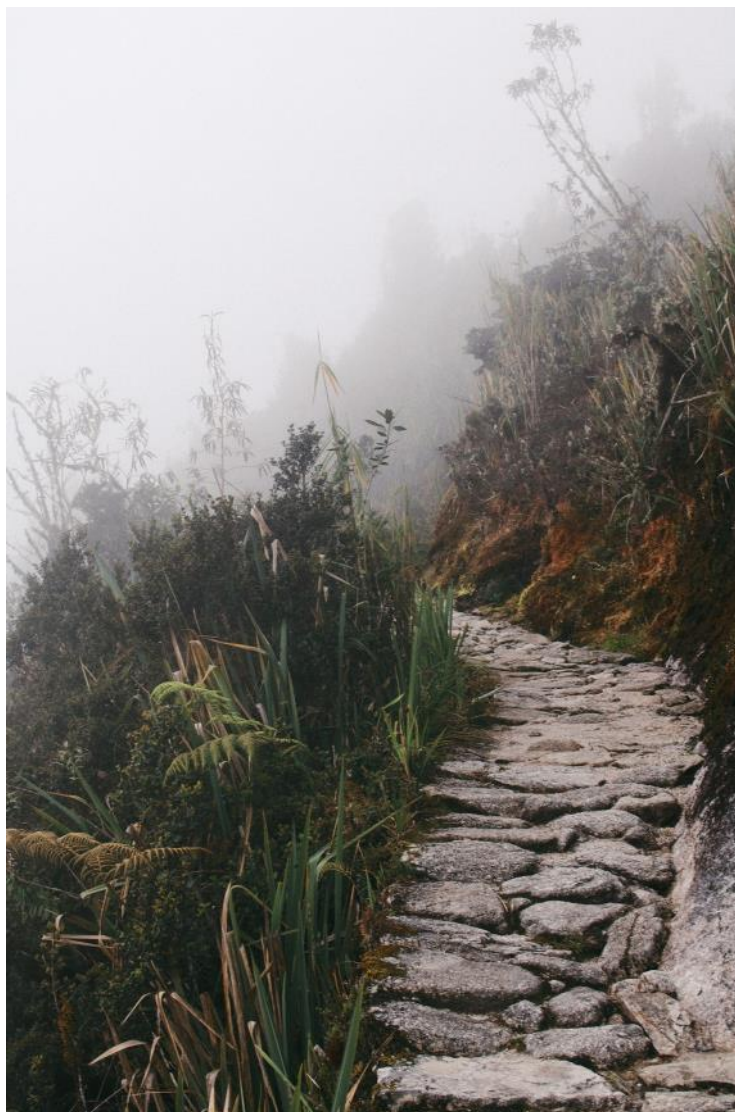
(2) ‘In my trials, Lord, walk with me; when my heart is almost breaking, Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me.’

(3) ‘When I’m in trouble, Lord, walk with me; when my head is bowed in sorrow, Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me.’

But in these three simple verses the author of the song’s desperate cry is for Jesus to be ‘a very present help in times of trouble’ (from Psalm 46:1), when the heart is breaking and the burden is too heavy, ‘when my head is bound in sorrow.’

The author knew how much they needed Jesus and how comforting it is to know that Jesus walks with us in our journey through life and the many things that we encounter all along our pilgrim journey. Jesus is always with us as we long for his companionship.

In this season of Lent, in the first chapter of Mark’s Gospel, we hear of Jesus who is alone in the wilderness as he encounters Satan, the tempter, for forty days. Mark’s writings of Jesus in the wilderness remind us that because Jesus walked ‘this lonesome valley,’ we’ll never go through our wilderness alone because Jesus is with us, facing the wild beasts, facing temptation and when the angels are ministering to us! Even when we feel like the world has been stripped away and those things that we’ve trusted and depended upon are fleeting – God is not! Jesus, who became ‘flesh and dwelt among us’, also walked the earth in his identity with us. Jesus knew sorrow and was acquainted with grief. The unknown writer of this song knew that they needed Jesus to walk with them at every turn of the transient nature of life.



“I Want Jesus to Walk with Me” is a song of communal lament, a song of invitation, and a song of assurance that Jesus walks alongside those who suffer. In its context as an African American Spiritual, the association of slavery, the horrible plight and yet faithful association with Jesus was of such a personal nature that they believed that Jesus accompanied them daily on their earthly journey and helped them endure its pains and sorrows. Gwendolin Warren, an African American author, in reflection on this spiritual, wrote:

*‘African-American Christians found great comfort and encouragement in believing that this life was only a journey, a “passing through to a better place . . . As*

*Continued...*

# Worship and the Arts

*they passed through the bitter trials of this earth, their desire was that they not walk alone, but that Jesus walk with them. Knowing that Jesus, who had already passed through the fiery trials and come out triumphant on the other side, was walking beside them gave them courage to go on.'*

Interestingly enough, many African American spirituals have no authors because they were often the spontaneous utterances of those who sang them born from the fruit of the creative capacity of an entire people rather than individuals. These utterances give voice to joys, sorrows and hopes of a people and the influences of the environment from which they sprang. (Ellen Gunther, *In Their Own Words*) Their songs speak about the rupture of black lives telling about a people in bondage and how through their faith and singing they were able to hold themselves together. Their songs helped them to retain their 'cultural identity' even while dwelling in a strange land. Even as the author of this spiritual pleads for Jesus to walk alongside us, there seems to be an assurance that Jesus' answer is 'yes,' because as the psalmist writes, 'Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me.' (Psalm 23:4) Perhaps in this song we might find ourselves proclaiming that 'the God in whom we take refuge calls us to provide refuge for those cast aside.'

While this hymn is often associated with Lent, it could be sung throughout the year because its message is that of a life's journey. The tune that we sing this song to is thought to be named after Sojourner Truth, (1797 – 1883) an enslaved woman and heroine of the Underground Railroad who spoke about freedom and equality for all. Moses Hogan, (1957-2003) an African American and Julliard School of Music graduate, was known for creating an arrangement of this song that is sung today.

"I Want Jesus To Walk With Me" is a song that acknowledges the struggle and the narrow way to which Jesus calls us. As we continue our Lenten journey along the pathway that eventually leads to our Easter, let's continually seek Jesus who walks with us along our pilgrim journey. Even though the sorrows, brokenness and troubles of this world will never define us – we still need Jesus to walk with us. Even as we recognize that this world is not our final home – we still need Jesus to walk with us! While not everyone will be facing trouble, or trial or sorrow, some will, and as the body of Christ who are one in Christ, together we call on Jesus to 'walk with us, to stay with us.'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8MNBHQLnawA>

## Worship at St. John's

*Online and In-person (subject to change)*

Sundays at 11am Broadcast online from the Sanctuary. Join us by visiting our website or YouTube channel. Search "SJLC." Our in-person worship is limited to 100 participants and follows strict health protocols.

Sundays at 9:27am In-person worship in the Faith Center. A gentle, 45-minute service led by our worship team. Thanks for wearing masks. More details on our website.

### DURING THE SEASON OF LENT

Wednesdays at 6:30 *Online only* Our on-line Lenten worship gathering, using the beautiful liturgy of Holden Evening Prayer.

Wednesdays 12:15-12:45 Our mid-week Lenten service of holy communion service in the Chapel. Strict health protocols are followed.

***Please watch for updates regarding in-person worship in FaithLife, social media, and website as we monitor recommendations and guidelines for in-person indoor gatherings.***

# Join Our Congregation-wide Lenten Project

## Personal Care Kits

This year's Lenten Congregation-Wide Project invites families to assemble personal care kits for Lutheran World Relief (LWR).

World War II left an estimated one-fifth of the world's Lutherans homeless. Soon after the war, Lutheran churches in the US mobilized to help the homeless in Europe through a new agency called Lutheran World Relief (LWR). LWR sends kits of various types throughout the world. In 2020, donated kits reached 616,210 neighbors in need in 23 countries with \$11.1 million worth of quilts, care kits and masks. There were 71,900 personal care kits distributed, all for the purpose of helping some of the world's poorest communities build the resilience they need to thrive.

Known as one of the most efficient and effective relief agencies in the world, LWR is also known for their quilt and Personal Care Kit ministry, sending quilts and kits to over 500,000 people around the world annually.

"Our goal this year is for each family unit to assemble one Personal Care Kit," says Pastor Rhodes. "It's a great way to return thanks for God's great gift of love through Jesus."

**Here's what the kits should include** (new items only, please):

- One lightweight, dark-colored bath towel between 20 inches by 40 inches and 52 inches by 27 inches.
- Two or three bath-size bars of soap equaling 8 to 9 ounces, any brand, in original wrapping.



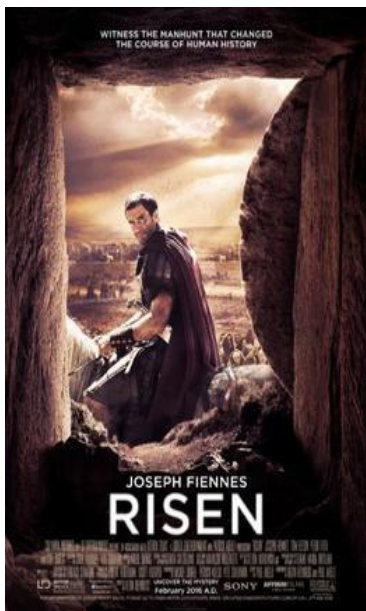
*"Our goal is for each family to assemble one Personal Care Kit."*

- One adult-sized toothbrush in its original packaging. Toothbrush multipacks may be used by sealing an individual toothbrush in a business-sized envelope.
- One sturdy comb, packaging removed.
- One set of metal nail clippers (attached file optional), packaging removed.

To pack your kits: Fold the towel in half. Place the rest of the items in the towel, fold and roll so nothing falls out, and secure with yarn, ribbon, string, or rubber bands.

You can drop off your kits between now and March 21 and place in the boxes located in Peeler Hall and the Pit.

You may also drop off the Personal Care Kits during the March 21 drive-thru, the Sunday before Holy Week. Children will receive materials for Palm Sunday and Easter.



## Our Lenten Movie: Risen

Come and enjoy the movie **Risen**, a acclaimed 2016 biblical drama film directed by Kevin Reynolds and written by Reynolds and Paul Aiello. The film stars Joseph Fiennes, Tom Felton, Peter Firth, and Cliff Curtis, and details a Roman soldier's search for Jesus's body following his resurrection.

The movie will be shown in the Faith Center on Wednesday, March 24, at 2 and 6 pm. Invite your friends and family. Admission is free. **ALL AGES WELCOME!** And, of course, we'll honor all COVID protocols for the event. Join us!

Order by March 24

# Easter Decorations

*Consider the Lilies and how they grow. They toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." (Luke 12:27)*

Be a part of a beautiful tradition at St. John's, as we decorate our worship spaces for Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday. Give thanks for the blessings in your life or remember and honor loved ones with the purchase of a palm or lily. Lilies may be purchased for \$15.00. Palms may be purchased for \$25.00.

We will also be collecting donations for the Easter Cross and altar flowers. All orders/money may be mailed to or taken to the church office or placed in a marked envelope in the offering plate. Deadline for ordering will be March 24.

Lilies and palms are delivered fresh to the church prior to Easter and available for you to take home after 11 am Easter Worship. A dedication insert will be included in the worship bulletin.



## 2021 Easter Lilies, Palms, and Flowers

Decoration	Price	In Memory of.....	In Honor of.....
Lily	\$15.00 each		
Palm	\$25.00 each		
Flowers	Amount \$ _____		

Given by \_\_\_\_\_

# Healthy Choices at the Child Development Center

## *Melissa Lamb joins the CDC as new cook*

By Susan Shinn Turner

Just as the Outdoor Learning Environment will provide children with fresh air and exercise, the St. John's Child Development Center's Advisory Committee wants to make children healthier on the inside, too.

The center, which serves 140 children daily, provides breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack.

"It has been a goal of our committee to improve the nutritional value of the meals and snacks being served at the CDC," says Barbara Jo Corriher, one of those committee members.

A new cook, Melissa Lamb, started in February. The CDC has also changed its food vendor to Performance Food Service, and is pleased with the change, Corriher says.

Lonna Richardson has begun working with Teresa Mowery, an RN who works with a local program used to improve nutrition and physical activity in the child care setting. Mowery can also provide healthy recipes for the CDC.

"The CDC has already made some improvements by trying to move from canned foods to fresh or frozen," Corriher notes. "The children often are served fresh oranges, apples, blueberries, melons, cucumbers, and carrots. They now serve water instead of juice, and 1 percent milk instead of whole. When possible, they are serving whole wheat grains instead of white, and ground turkey instead of ground beef."

"Our plan is to connect the playground to healthy eating, too," Richardson says. "We will grow the vegetables and then they'll get a chance to taste them."

Corriher is working on gathering healthy suggestions and simple recipes, while keeping in mind kid-friendly foods and recipes that are cost effective and may be prepared in a timely manner.

"The cook makes baby food daily for the infants," Corriher adds. "Serving whole foods versus processed will certainly be a goal."

She continues, "To assist with the preparation of more nutritious foods, the CDC kitchen needs equipment. The administrative team will research the most advantageous tools for the kitchen. Currently they only have a small food processor, so this is an area where we hope to make improvements. The CDC kitchen will possibly be renovated during G2G phase 2. The G2G plans allow for the storage of more fresh fruits and vegetables and more storage for frozen fruits/vegetables. The G2G plan would also allow for more prep area."

If you have recipes that would meet the CDC criteria (healthy, child-friendly, cost-effective, timely in preparation, and no nuts, including almond milk), please email them to Barbara Corriher at [dbc corriher@ctc.net](mailto:dbc corriher@ctc.net).

## The new Outdoor Learning Environment is Open!

By Susan Shinn Turner

The St. John's Outdoor Learning Environment is open!

"We had a soft opening in February, and the kids are using it on a modified basis," says Amy Ritchie, a member of the Child Development Center's Advisory Committee, which first envisioned the new space. The CDC worked with the Natural Learning Initiative at N.C. State University to make the OLE a reality.

"We'll have a grand opening once spring-like weather starts," she says. "March weather is just so unpredictable."

The new space is completely different from a traditional playground, Ritchie notes. "We have many different learning

centers, and teachers have to be involved more. This is an extension of the classroom."

Several of the center's teachers have received specific certification for the OLE.

"The kids are very excited about it," says Lonna Richardson, one of the interim directors at the CDC. "We got outside for exactly two days in February and then the rain came. We are very excited about what's to come. It's been a neat process to watch it all come together. And the cool part is that it's an ongoing process."

Be sure to read about the Outdoor Learning Environment's progress in upcoming issues of the Eagle's View.



## Our Latest “Conversations that Matter” Podcast *Pastor Rhodes Interviews Colleen McDaniel*

Have you subscribed to the St. John’s “Conversations that Matter” podcast ?

In March, Pastor Rhodes interviews Colleen McDaniel, who helped design and construct the CDC’s new Outdoor Learning Environment. Colleen owns The Inspired Garden, a landscaping company from the Baden Lake area.

“Colleen is creative, smart, and wonderfully gracious,” says Pastor Rhodes. “In many ways, her whole life has brought her to this moment. What a great partner she’s been.”

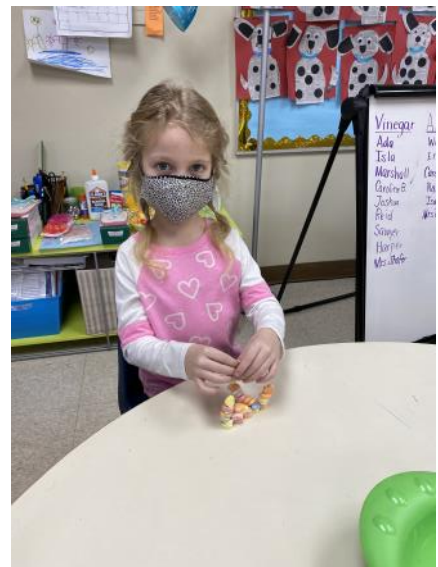
Listen to the full conversation by searching “Conversations that Matter” on Apple Podcast, iHeartRadio, Spotify and more.

You can also catch up on past sermons on the SJLC Sermon Podcast Channel. Search “SJLC,” and don’t forget to rate and subscribe!



*Colleen McDaniel of The Inspired Garden*

## Valentine’s Day at the St. John’s Kindergarten





# A Vision for Racial Healing

## *Reflections from Members of the Drafting Team*

### **Reflection from Marian Hough:**

Over the last several months, I have been working with a team to develop the “Vision for Racial Healing” at St. John’s. While serving on this team we have had meaningful discussions about the future of St. John’s and how the “Vision for Racial Healing” will be used to guide that future. As a young adult, I hope to see St. John’s as a leading part of the community for many years to come. I view this “Vision for Racial Healing” as a hope for our future and recognizing the need for racial healing, justice, and equity in our community.

I am a public educator here in Rowan County, teaching American and World History. Throughout my work, I have encountered inquisitive students who seek to understand why systemic racism exists, why there are injustices, and why our country and world still face issues of equity. These are not issues of the past, but are issues still faced in today’s society. The young people in our community are curious to know how to correct these issues. As an educator, I have to foster a safe space for discussion, empathy, and growth. The “Vision for Racial Healing” is an opportunity for our church to lead in this conversation within our community. Through engaging in this tough conversation with the other team members, I have become a better educator. I am now more prepared to guide my students when they ask about these pieces of “hard history.”

### **Reflection from Caroline Parrott:**

When light was shed on recent police brutality incidents in our nation last summer, I felt lost, scared, confused, and full of questions. Where was God in all of this? How could I use my voice and privilege to stand up for others? A few weeks later, I received a call from Pastor Rhodes asking about my thoughts and ideas for how St. John’s could respond to the events--I didn’t have an answer, but I told him I would be happy to help. I didn’t know how to use my own voice, let alone speak on behalf of an entire congregation...but from that very first Zoom call with Pastor Rhodes, Ted Goins, and Evelyn Medina, I could sense that something good was brewing in our church, and I began to find my voice.



In meeting with the team and simultaneously reading “Dear Church” by Lenny Duncan, I learned so much about the troubled history of our church and world. Throughout this drafting process, I have been inspired by all of my fellow congregation members to speak up for others, actively listen to all, and work to bring God’s vision for peace and justice to our earth. I know that St. John’s “Vision for Racial Healing” document will be a guiding light as we put our words into action to build bridges and begin the healing process in our society from centuries of racism. I am confident that St. John’s will be a leader in our community to promote this equity and justice because I know that it is God’s vision for us to do good, seek justice, and correct oppression (Isaiah 1:17).

Since graduating from college in May of 2020, I have taken on a role at the Community Care Clinic here in town -- this is a free clinic for uninsured patients in our community. I have seen firsthand the effects of systemic racism in marginalized communities. I have also seen how the pandemic has disproportionately affected our brothers and sisters of color. It is my hope that this document will be a spark that lights the fire of lifting up our communities of color to bring an end to the injustices in our world.

*See the complete Vision on pages 18-19.*

# *A Vision for Racial Healing*

“What does the Lord require of us,  
but to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God?”  
Micah 6:8

Racism is a sin that prevents humankind from experiencing the fulness of God’s kingdom on earth. Rooted in God’s love for the whole world, we are called as Christians to demonstrate courage and conviction to end the sin of racism.



**OUR CONFESSION:** We confess our complicity in this sin by not actively working to end racism in our community and the world. We acknowledge our biases and the racial disparities that exist. Because the church has not yet become the full, inclusive reflection of God’s kingdom, we deeply repent and seek God’s forgiveness. Through a change of mind, we pray that God will bring to us a change of heart that leads us to a change of behavior.

**OUR COMMITMENTS:** The community of faith at St. John’s Lutheran Church commits itself to:

- promote equality among all people,
- oppose racism in all its forms,
- address and dismantle systemic racism,
- work for the healing and health of our community,
- examine our own practices so they better align with Jesus’ vision for the world, and
- build relationships of trust and solidarity with people in and beyond our congregation so that we may grow together into the people God desires us to be.

This work will be difficult and sometimes painful as we know radical change never comes without sacrifice. We will not allow this Vision to be a momentary call for action but, instead, an ongoing journey rooted in love.

**OUR PRINCIPLES:** The following principles will enable us to live into these commitments and serve as measuring sticks as we step into the future together:

WE WILL BE GROUNDED IN THE LANGUAGE OF LOVE  
“No, they wouldn’t listen to a word I said....” Jeremiah 29:19

Just as we didn’t listen to God in Jeremiah, we have a hard time listening to each other. We are challenged by the difference between hearing, listening, and active listening. We can hear without listening and listen without comprehending, which ultimately leads to confusion and the erosion of trust in one another. In spite of the challenge, we believe that our language matters, and that a change in language can lead to a change in culture. Therefore, in all that we do, the people of St. John’s will strive to speak the language of love within our increasingly diverse community. As we grow together, we will practice the art of active listening. We will reject hate speech of any kind, adhering to the biblical principle of building up, rather than tearing down (Ephesians 4:29).

### WE WILL WALK ALONGSIDE OUR NEIGHBORS, DELIBERATELY AND LOVINGLY

"I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." John 13:34-35

We envision a congregation of disciples committed to Jesus' commandment to "love one another" – love that is grounded in relationship and finds expression in our actions on behalf of one another. We are committed to increasing the number of opportunities for members of our congregation and community to learn from, listen to, and be led by communities of color. We will support and take action alongside these communities to promote economic prosperity, educational equality, equal access to healthcare, equal and fair treatment in the justice system, and the right to vote free from any racial, social, or cultural biases. These actions will require the courage to challenge -- through loving, non-violent means -- the racial biases that dehumanize and oppress people of color, even when it is uncomfortable to do so. In that light, we re-commit ourselves to the work of such things as Racial Equity Rowan and vibrant, creative partnerships with our public schools, especially those that serve minority and marginalized students. Our commitment to anti-racism will continue until race is no longer a predictor of outcomes.

### WE RECOGNIZE OUR NEED TO GROW

"Give instruction to the wise, and they will become wiser still, teach the righteous and they will gain in learning." Proverbs 9:9

As disciples, we are called to a pattern of life-long learning and honest self-assessment. We recognize that there is a need to grow in our understanding of racial healing and equity. Therefore, we are committed to developing robust and multi-faceted opportunities for members within and outside our congregation to expand their understanding of race and racial justice. Through small group studies, a digitally-based resource center, and a continuation of our "Conversations that Matter" ministry, we commit ourselves to providing space and resources for growing together.

### WE VALUE AUTHENTIC AND DIVERSE RELATIONSHIPS

"I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ... that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought." 1 Corinthians 1:10

Sustainable culture change begins with a change in relationships. Change in relationships requires proximity and intentionality. With that in mind, we are committed to fostering authentic and meaningful relationships in our community that cross racial, religious, and socioeconomic divides. We will support and amplify the work of community institutions, agencies, schools, and businesses that intentionally create space for diversity and make room for conversation that is bound by mutual respect and reasoned deliberation. We will continue to prioritize the work of our Child Development Center as a school that celebrates diversity, provides equal access to quality education, and reflects the demographic of Salisbury/Rowan, all within the framework of a Christ-centered community.



## *Our Hope*

Our Vision for Racial Healing is to be highly deliberate in building and fostering a beloved community. This commitment to community is summarized by one of the simplest verses in the Bible, "love your neighbor" (Mark 23:31). As a beloved community, we will walk alongside our neighbors in Christ to strive for peace, justice, and equality for all, especially those harmed by racism. We pray that our commitments, rooted in love, will assist in the dismantling of discrimination and racism while promoting unity within our communities and beyond.



## ***The Other Side of the Wall Study with Pastor Munther Isaac***

By Susan Shinn Turner

More than two dozen members of St. John's and residents of five other states participated in a recent four-week Bible study, *The Other Side of the Wall*, led by author Munther Isaac, pastor of our sister congregation in Bethlehem, Christmas Lutheran Church.

Each week, the group discussed two to three chapters of Isaac's 10-chapter book. He encouraged participants to "look through the lens of being peacemakers," said B.J. Connor, who was a part of the group along with her husband, Michael.

Isaac and his wife, Rudaina, feel called to stay where they are, even though many Palestinian families are leaving.

"What we wait for is what we work for," he said.

Each session opened with Isaac giving a brief talk, followed by participants' insights, questions, and answers.

"We love Pastor Munther," B.J. says. "He stayed at our house and we've had lunch at his house. I think it's a super important book, and it's definitely a narrative Americans don't hear enough or seek out enough."

Michael Connor has traveled extensively in the Holy Land since 2012. He and the group heard first-hand stories about what Isaac and his family have experienced.

"The book has given me a much deeper understanding of lamentation and hope — how hope is an active concept versus a passive concept," Connor said.

Isaac's family, too, has been affected by the pandemic. His mother and sister have both had Covid, and his two sons cannot go to school. Though Israel has already vaccinated a

*Continued ...*

vast majority of its citizens, there is no specific plan for vaccinating those in the Palestinian territories. Munther estimates that they are 6-8 months behind the United States as far as receiving it.

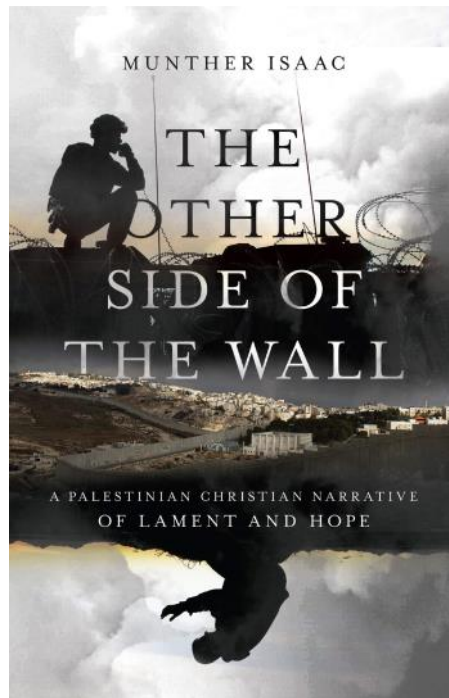
“It’s a good book and it was a good discussion,” Mike said. “Having the author lead the discussion was particularly powerful.”

Roger and Linda Hull also participated in this study.

“It’s always good to hear other voices,” he said of the folks from other states and denominations who participated.

This study, he said, “reaffirms what these people are facing every day. We need to support Bright Stars of Bethlehem and Dar Al-Kalima University College of Arts and Culture.”

The Hulls were part of a group from St. John’s who visited the Holy Land in 2015.



“If you ever go, take a tour with a Palestinian guide,” he said. “You’ll see the other side of the story.”

Jay and Meg Dees had signed up for an upcoming trip to the Holy Land hosted by St. John’s, which has since been delayed. They wanted to participate in the study to prepare for that trip, he said.

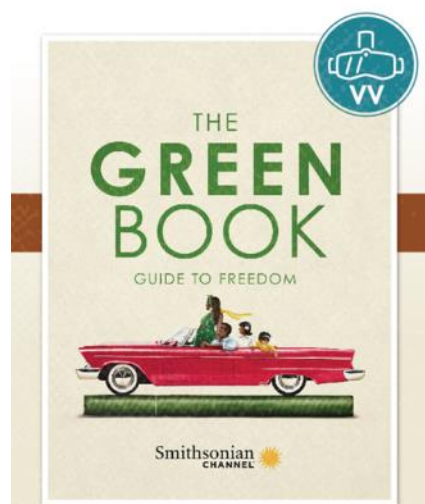
“Our group was already well versed in theology, geography, and history,” he said. “For us, it was more about learning from scratch. It was really interesting to get the personal perspective that Munther brings.

“It was a great background history of the geopolitical scene and the theological scene presented through the eyes of a Palestinian.”

## N.C. Transportation Museum Hosts Black History Month Events

In celebration of Black History Month, a banner exhibit on Victor Green’s *The Negro Motorist Green Book*, created by the N.C. African American Heritage Commission, is currently on display through March 14 at the N.C. Transportation Museum, “Navigating Jim Crow: The Green Book and Oasis Spaces in North Carolina.”

Dr. Da’Tarvia Parrish from Livingstone College assembled a wonderful panel of community leaders to share their reflections and experiences using “The Green Book” as a travel guide during the turbulent times of the Jim Crow era. Angela Thorpe, Director of the N.C. African American Heritage Commission kicked-off



the evening with comments about the work of the Commission and the N.C. Transportation Museum.

A recording of this virtual event is available on the N.C. Transportation Museum YouTube Channel.

St. John’s member, Elaine Holden, helped create and coordinate the event. Elaine is the Outreach and Program Coordinator for the NC Transportation Museum Foundation.

## Updates to the 2020 CARES Act

Are there current tax advantages I can take advantage of? Yes! the Consolidated Appropriations Act (CAA) of 2021 extended some of the tax advantages of the 2020 CARES Act. For example:

- Your ability to deduct up to 100% of your adjusted gross income (AGI) through a cash contribution to charity is extended through the end of 2021.
- The 2020 CARES Act suspends the Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs) from qualified accounts such as IRAs. This suspension was not mentioned in the CAA, and thus it is understood that for 2021, RMDs are reinstated for those over age 70½.



## Individual Counseling Available

With Lauren Stephenson, M.S., LMHCA, NCC. Free and available to the community. Contact the Church Office (704-636-3431) or sign up online at [stjohns-counseling.youcanbook.me](http://stjohns-counseling.youcanbook.me)

Learn more at [stjohns-salisbury.org/counseling](http://stjohns-salisbury.org/counseling)

## St. John's Leadership

### CONGREGATION COUNCIL

2021 President .... Mike Edwards  
Vice President .... Carole Parrott  
Secretary .... Mary Wymbs  
Treasurer .... Tommy Page  
Financial Secretary...Cory Gebhardt  
Personnel Secretary ... Jeanie Moore

#### Term Expires 2021

Randy Overcash  
David Hord  
Mike Agee  
Mary Wymbs  
Larry Britt

#### Term Expires 2022

Christopher Derrick  
Mike Edwards  
Penny Moss  
Dennis Rogers  
Rosalind Hines

#### Term Expires 2023

Dr. Larry Cartner  
Elaine Holden  
Brenda Munday  
Carole Parrott  
Colleen Young

#### Youth Members

Sacha Medina and Ryan Brady

#### Benevolent Foundation Trustees

Chip Bridges, Chair  
Chris Agner  
Margaret Kluttz  
John Denker  
Lori Yang

### MINISTRY GROUP STAFF CONTACTS

Worship and the Arts – Rob Durocher  
Discipleship – Pastor Laura Henrik  
Mercy and Justice – Pastor Rhodes Woolly  
Congregational Life – Diane Poole  
Stewarding God's Resources – Ruth Ann Diehl

## Calendar Updates

You may have noticed the monthly calendar has not been included in the Eagle's View for several months. Due to the necessity for schedule flexibility because of Covid safety precautions, please continue to check the Wednesday FaithLife, social media, and our website for the latest calendar updates.

You may also sign up for more detailed information from Youth Ministry, Children's Ministry, and Senior Seasons via email.

Thank you for your continued patience regarding scheduling and promotion.

Dear St. John's Family,

Thank you for your outpouring of love — twice! — last year: when Mike's mom, Antoinette D'Angelo Connor, died of Covid, and when Michael was hospitalized with kidney failure. We were touched and humbled by your prayers, cards, food, e-mails, and texts.

We thank God that Toni is in heaven, and that Mike has made an excellent recovery.

Thanks and love,  
B.J. & Mike Connor



## Congratulations

On the birth of Warren Matthew Agee on Feb. 21. Grandparents are Sharon and Mike Agee.

## Consolation

Joan Harris and family, on the passing of Charlie Harris on Thursday, Feb. 18. His funeral was on February 20.

Henry Trexler, Rebecca Hooks and family, on the passing of Judy Trexler on Thursday, Feb. 11. Her funeral was on February 19.

Linda and Roger Hull, and family, on the passing of Linda's sister, Jane Robinette, age 87, on Monday, Feb. 1. She lived in Eustis, FL.

Maria, Mark, and Rebecca Lewis, on the passing of Maria's mother, Rebecca Peeler Henderson, age 89, on Sat. Feb. 6.

Delores Thomas-Teague upon the passing of her mother, Doris Lingerfelt, on February 25. Her funeral was on February 28 in Statesville.

## Happy Birthday!

*Congratulations to our Octogenarians  
celebrating March birthdays:*

Bobbie Ann Brown, Tommy Carlton, Eva Doyle, Pat Epting,  
Bob Glover, Joan Harris, Mack Lampert, Barbara Sims,  
Irene Stewart, and Emily Stirewalt,

## St. John's Ministry Staff

### Pastoral Ministry

Senior Pastor .....Rhodes Woolly  
Pastor of Youth and Discipleship.....Laura Henrik  
Visitation.....Wade Rouzer

### Worship and Music Ministry

Minister of Worship and the Arts.....Rob Durocher, deacon  
Associate Parish Musician.....Rosemary Kinard  
Director of Music Emeritus.....Karl Kinard, deacon  
Director, St. John's Men's Chorus..... Jason Harwood  
Assisting Organist.....Deanna Boksleitner  
Bell Choirs.....Kimberly Lentz  
Production Manager.....Taylor Hutchins  
Contemporary Worship Leader.....Bradley Chestnut

### Program Ministry

Adults.....Danny Hines  
Children.....Stacey Shafer  
Youth .....Laura Henrik  
Senior Adults .....Diane Poole  
St. John's Kindergarten (4 and 5 year olds) .....Teresa Stoner  
CDC Interim Directors ..... Lonna Richardson and Kristy King

### Administrative Team

Business Manager .....Ruth Ann Diehl  
Office Manager.....Deborah Cross  
Accounting.....Mark Bias  
Communications Specialist ..... Angel Owens  
Writer .....Susan Shinn Turner  
Facilities Manager.....Jon Koppe  
Maintenance.....David Ellenburg

The Rev. Dr. Timothy M Smith, Bishop of the NC Synod  
The Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Eaton, Presiding Bishop of the ELCA

### The best way to contact staff at this time is by email.

Staff Email: first name@stjohns-salisbury.org  
Visit us on the web at stjohns-salisbury.org  
Kindergarten 704.636.4404  
Kindergarten@stjohns-salisbury.org  
Child Development Center 704.636.6756  
cdc@stjohns-salisbury.org  
Kindergarten@stjohns-salisbury.org

### Office hours

Monday-Thursday, 9 am-5 pm; Friday 9-12.  
Telephone 704.636.3431; Fax 704.636.4461

### Worship During Covid-19 Restrictions

Traditional Worship Sundays at 11 am in the Sanctuary  
Contemporary Worship Sundays at 9:27 am in the Faith Center  
Mid-week Communion Service, Wednesdays at 12:15 pm in  
the Chapel

Visit stjohns-salisbury.org and click "listen live,"  
watch on Facebook Live, or search "SJLC" on YouTube

Listen to worship each Sunday morning at 11 am on  
stjohns-salisbury.org, and click Listen Live. Listen to previous  
week's service at 9 am Sunday on WSAT 1280 AM.

### EAGLE'S VIEW (USPS 716—020)

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**Please deliver by March 1**

### Eagle's View Deadline

The April Eagle's View will be published in March.  
Please email stories and news to  
angel@stjohns-salisbury.org by March 12!

### On Call List

If there is a pastoral emergency, please call **704.856.9751**  
to reach the pastor on call.

**Prayer Chain.** Our Prayer Chain is updated daily and  
emailed to interested persons Monday through Friday. To  
add or subtract a name, please contact Deborah Cross at  
deborah@stjohns-salisbury.org. Also let Deborah know if  
you would like to receive the daily Prayer Chain.



Let's connect faith and life. *Together.*